

Samantha K. Miller Gurski

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Scholar-practitioner whose work examines—and enacts—the productive tension between institutional mission and market demand in professional and lifelong learning. Builds learning systems that are simultaneously rigorous, financially sustainable, and equitable by design.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Director, Continuing & Professional Education

2020 – PRESENT

Columbus State University — Columbus, Georgia

- Lead a self-sustaining, multi-unit learning enterprise — continuing and professional education, an English Language Institute, youth programs, and an authorized Prometric testing center — serving 4,000+ learners annually across corporate, government, military, and international audiences, with full P&L accountability and no state subsidy.
- Direct a team of 11 full-time and 30+ part-time staff and instructors spanning program development, operations, finance, and international education; authored the division's first mission, vision, and values framework to align a growing multi-unit organization.
- Built and delivered custom workforce programs for the U.S. Army across multiple installations and for corporate partners including Aflac, training 450+ insurance professionals.
- Launched a first-in-state embedded credential initiative integrating PMI, Pearson, and Intuit industry certifications into existing academic coursework with 10+ faculty — without rebuilding courses; accepted for national presentation at UPCEA 2026.
- Manage an active international portfolio: a partnership with Teikyo University (Japan); the Busan Metropolitan Government's Global Village TESOL training partnership (South Korea), renegotiated and renewed for 2026; and Georgia's only SEVP-approved Bridge Pathway Program.
- Established the university's first instructional design function (2026), including LMS and SCORM production workflows, to move flagship programs online — beginning with English Language Institute offerings in TOEFL preparation and academic English.
- Designed a proprietary data-literacy consulting framework (MAPS) and advanced a three-phase engagement proposal with the Georgia Division of Aging Services.

Assistant Director

2018 – 2020

Columbus State University — Columbus, Georgia

- Managed 4 full-time and 15 part-time staff and instructors.
- Earned IACET accreditation with zero findings; expanded ELI Bridge credit-bearing course offerings from 6 to 61 through strategic academic partnerships.

Program Coordinator, Adult, Youth & Custom Training

2016 – 2018

Columbus State University — Columbus, Georgia

- Doubled adult programming revenue within a single year through redesigned offerings and instructor recruitment.
- Built assessment frameworks for measuring learning outcomes across open-enrollment and custom programs.

Principal

2025 – PRESENT

Growth Node, LLC

- Independent consulting and training practice in learning strategy, data literacy, executive coaching, and organizational development.

EDUCATION

Ed.D., Higher Education Administration

EXPECTED 2027

University of Georgia | Dissertation: learning systems governance and workforce-aligned credentials — how configurations of formal and informal institutional authority shape the translation of credential policy into practice

M.S., Organizational Leadership

2019

Columbus State University | 4.0 GPA | Beta Gamma Sigma | Phi Kappa Phi

B.A., Philosophy (Minor: Biology/Pre-Med)

2013

University of South Carolina | Howard Hughes Medical Institute Undergraduate Research Fellow

PRESENTATIONS & RECOGNITION

- UPCEA SOLAR & Convergence Conferences — accepted national presentation on embedded industry credentials in academic coursework (July/Oct 2026).
- Project Management Institute, Columbus Chapter — PDU learning developer and presenter.
- Georgia Tech College of Lifetime Learning Symposium — presenter (October 2025).
- Georgia Young Gamechanger honoree (2024) — project spurred creation of Regional Economic Development Authority within Columbus, GA and Muscogee county.

CREDENTIALS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Project Management Professional (PMP) — Project Management Institute
- Executive Project Management Certificate — University of Georgia
- ICF Coach Training — training complete, practicum in progress
- Certified PMI Instructor — PMP and CAPM

